

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sharpe et al., U.S. Patent 5,433,722. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

It is noted, with appreciation, that the Examiner has indicated that claims 2-6, although objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, although the Applicant does not agree with the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by the Sharpe et al. patent, with a view toward expediting the prosecution of the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2 and correspondingly claim 2 has been cancelled from the present application. In addition, claims 3-6 have been amended so as to be dependent from claim 1. Accordingly, it is now believed the present application is in condition for allowance and thus reconsideration of the rejections and objections and allowance of all of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested.

The Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 24, 2003 has not been acknowledged by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner return an initialed copy of the PTO Form 1449 filed with the Information Disclosure Statement to show that the reference has been considered and to complete the file.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Joseph A. Kolasch Reg. No. 22,463 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

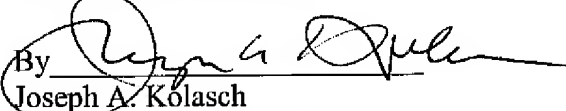
Application No. 10/601,579  
Amendment dated December 21, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of September 21, 2006

Docket No.: 4140-0110P

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: December 21, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By   
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